

## **EXHIBIT G**

# The Guardian



## Tesla whistleblower claims company is 'doing everything it can to silence me'

**The electric carmaker is suing a former technician for alleged hacking, but he says he's being scapegoated for leaking concerns**

**Julia Carrie Wong in San Francisco**

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On Wednesday morning, Martin Tripp was an out-of-work Tesla technician trying to figure out what to do next.

By the end of the day, he had been sued by his former employer for alleged hacking and theft, engaged in a hostile email exchange with Elon Musk, come out as a whistleblower, and was being patted down by sheriff's deputies over allegations that he was threatening to go to his former workplace and "shoot the place up".

"I'm a scapegoat because I provided information that is absolutely true," Tripp told the Guardian on Wednesday evening. "This is obscene ... It feels like I have no rights as a whistleblower."

On Thursday, after the local sheriff's office had announced that there was no credible threat to the Gigafactory, Tripp commented further: "They're trying to do everything they can to silence me and trying to set an example so that no one else will talk to the press."

Tripp's dispute with the electric car company erupted into a high-stakes round of he-said/Tesla-said when it filed a federal lawsuit against him on Wednesday.

The suit alleged that Tripp had "unlawfully hacked" Tesla's manufacturing operating system (MOS) - writing code that would export confidential information to third parties and planting the code on three different computer systems such that other employees would be "falsely implicated as guilty parties".



Martin Tripp was sued by Tesla for hacking and theft. He says he's actually a whistleblower. Photograph: Courtesy of Martin Tripp

The complaint also accused Tripp of making "false claims to the media about the information he stole", and specifically referenced claims about punctured battery cells, excess scrap material and manufacturing delays.

But Tripp, a former process technician at Tesla's Gigafactory in Nevada, told the Guardian that he leaked information to a reporter at Business Insider because no one at the company was listening to his concerns.

"When it's world impactful, when you're lying to the world and investors about the cars you're producing and how sustainable you are, when you're saying one thing and doing another, the righteous thing is for the world to know," Tripp said by phone.

Tesla has rejected Tripp's claim to be a whistleblower and challenged the accuracy of the information he provided to Business Insider.

In an email to the Guardian about Tripp's whistleblower claim on Wednesday afternoon, Musk wrote that Tripp "sent me a threatening email" and that "we received a call at the Gigafactory that he was going to come back and shoot people".

Tesla subsequently released a statement saying the company had "received a phone call from a friend of Mr Tripp" warning that Tripp was going to "shoot the place up". The company alerted the police and increased security at the factory. Sheriff's deputies met Tripp at his hotel and questioned him.

Tesla has said it would not provide further information, while the Storey county sheriff's office said it was investigating "the threat's origin".

The lawsuit capped an already strange news cycle for Tesla and its chief executive, Elon Musk.

In an email to Tesla employees sent on Sunday evening, Musk wrote that he had just learned that a Tesla employee had engaged in "quite extensive and damaging sabotage to our operations" which included "making direct code changes" to the MOS and transferring data to third parties.

Musk went on to say that the alleged saboteur could be an agent of one of the "long list of organizations that want Tesla to die", including short-sellers, the fossil fuel industry and rival car manufacturers.

In a second email sent on Monday, Musk referenced a small fire at the company's Fremont factory and again appeared to stoke suspicions of sabotage, writing: "Could just be a random event, but as Andy Grove said, 'Only the paranoid survive.'" The emails were first reported by CNBC.

Though Musk never named Tripp in his emails, the allegations of hacking the MOS are similar, and many news outlets identified Tripp as the "alleged saboteur" once the lawsuit was filed.

Tripp says that any suggestions that he was a saboteur are "flat-out lies".

"I've never gone to any outside company, any oil industry people," he added. "I care about the public and safety."



A Tesla at a charging point in Beijing, China. Photograph: Thomas Peter/Reuters

A 40-year-old US navy veteran, Tripp started working for Tesla in October 2017. “I left a really god job and condo in Milwaukee ... because I thought I was going to do something good for the world, accelerating the world’s sustainability,” he said, referencing Tesla’s corporate mission.

Tripp conceded that he had difficulty adjusting to Tesla’s workplace culture, but he denied a claim by Musk that he had acted out of anger over not receiving a promotion.

Instead, he said, he grew increasingly concerned about a range of issues that were eventually reported on by Business Insider, including high rates of “nonconforming material” that ended up being wasted and a batch of battery cells that were mistakenly punctured.

“I kept bringing this up to management, supervisors, anyone who would listen,” Tripp said. “Everyone just said, ‘Yeah, whatever.’”

Tripp acknowledged that he provided information from Tesla’s MOS to Business Insider, but said that there was no “hacking” involved; he claimed that he simply queried the database to provide verification of his claims to the reporter.

“I’m not that smart,” Tripp said. “I don’t know how to code. I tried to teach myself to code and I don’t have the patience.”

Tripp also said he did not understand a claim by Tesla that he tried to implicate other employees by planting code on different computers - allegations he said were made to him during Tesla’s investigation.

The accusations came up again in the heated email exchange shared by both Musk and Tripp with the Guardian, after Tripp found out that he was being sued.

*Tripp: “Don’t worry, you have what’s coming to you for the lies you have told to the public and investors.”*

*Musk: “Threatening me only makes it worse for you”*

*Tripp: “I never made a threat. I simply told you that you have what’s coming. Thank you for this gift!!!!”*

*Musk: “You should be ashamed of yourself for framing other people. You’re a horrible human being.”*

*Tripp: “I NEVER ‘framed’ anyone else or even insinuated anyone else as being involved in my production of documents of your MILLIONS OF DOLLARS OF WASTE, Safety concerns, lying to investors/the WORLD. Putting cars on the road with safety issues is being a horrible human being!”*

*Musk: “There are literally injuries[sic] with Model 3. It is by far the safest car in the world for any midsize vehicle. And of course a company with billions of dollars in product is going to have millions of dollars in scrap. This is not news.*

*“However, betraying your word of honor, breaking the deal you had when Tesla gave you a job and framing your colleagues are wrong and some come with legal penalties. So it goes. Be well.”*

Musk told the Guardian by email: “He initiated the email exchange this morning at 8.57am. I certainly would not have initiated contact, nor would I even know his personal email address, and it was probably unwise for me to have responded.”

Tripp said that he did not intend his email as a threat. "All I meant by 'you're going to get what you have coming' is that the truth is going to come out."

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